



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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ROMNEY ADMINISTRATION RELEASES 2004 COMMONWEALTH CAPITAL GRANTS

More than \$18 million in awards announced

Massachusetts Environmental Affairs Secretary Ellen Herzfelder today announced statewide Commonwealth Capital grants that will preserve agricultural lands and help cities and towns reach their open space goals. Totalling more than \$18 million, these grants are central to the Commonwealth Capital program announced earlier this month by Governor Mitt Romney as part of his goal to adopt a more strategic approach to land protection in the Commonwealth.

State housing, environmental, and transportation agencies collectively administer hundreds of millions of dollars in capital spending each year, but with little coordination. Under the newly created Commonwealth Capital program, the Romney Administration will now strategically decide how these funds are spent through the Office of Commonwealth Development, investing in projects that meet sustainable development goals.

"This year, we have been more innovative than ever before in leveraging funds from municipalities and from the federal government to make sure we stretch our dollars as far as possible," said Secretary Herzfelder. "In this fiscal year, our \$18 million in state funding will leverage an additional \$52 million from our federal, municipal, and private partners. For 2004, we will conserve land worth more than \$70 million, an increase of roughly \$5 million over what we protected last year – that's what I call *smart* conservation," added Herzfelder.

In fiscal 2003, Environmental Affairs' land acquisition efforts leveraged \$1.11 for every dollar spent. For fiscal 2004, Environmental Affairs will seek to achieve \$2.75 worth of leverage for each dollar spent, an increase of 144%. Similar leverage targets are envisioned for fiscal 2005's land acquisition efforts.

Secretary Herzfelder released the 2004 Commonwealth Capital grant list at Rochester's Eastover Farm. Referred to as the "Crown Jewel" within Rochester's "common wealth" of beautiful places, Eastover Farm is a landmark location for both Rochester and Marion. Using monies from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund, the state's \$212,500 Self Help grant to the Town of Rochester will preserve Eastover's roughly 80 acres of wetlands, rare species, and historic landscapes. This acquisition is part of the Eastover Farm Land Preservation Project to permanently protect 780 acres in Rochester and Marion.

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“The Trustees of Reservations applauds Secretary Herzfelder’s commitment to this project and to the Self Help, Urban Self Help, and Agricultural Preservation Restriction Programs which are vital tools for Massachusetts communities striving to preserve their character and natural history as they grow,” according to Stephen Sloan, South Coast and Cape Cod Area Manager for The Trustees of Reservations, a nonprofit Massachusetts conservation organization.

Today’s announcement included \$5.6 million to fund 20 Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APRs) that will preserve 1,798 acres of threatened agricultural parcels across the state. Administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR), the APR program purchases development rights on the state’s most productive farmland. These restrictions ensure such prime farmland remains in productive agricultural use into the future. Since the program’s inception 27 years ago more than 60,000 agricultural acres have been preserved in Massachusetts. This amount represents roughly 15% of all the state’s farmland.

“I am just thrilled that Eastover Farm is receiving this grant,” Senator Joan M. Menard (D-Fall River) said today. “Saving this natural sanctuary from development has been one of my priorities since Rochester became a part of my district.”

“I am delighted the administration has responded to our local calls of support for this project which will preserve for generations the land heritage of Rochester,” said State Representative William M. Straus (D - Mattapoisett).

An award of \$2,679,250 in state and federal grants was made to fund 14 projects that will protect 1,219 total acres across 15 Massachusetts communities. \$1,147,500 of this amount comes from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. These grants will help towns to protect water supplies, acquire open space for conservation, protect historic landscapes, and preserve rare species. A \$4,098,345 award will fund 27 Urban Self Help (USH) projects that will help a total of 25 Massachusetts cities and towns purchase and prepare sites for parks and open space. SH and USH funds are administered by the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs’ Division of Conservation Services.

Secretary Herzfelder also announced Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game (DFG) land protection funding totaling \$6,455,000. Comprising approximately 40 projects on 2,500 acres, these funds will help to protect water supply, coastline, and rare species. Of this amount, \$745,000 will be spent to add 39 acres to existing urban parklands.

“Not very long ago we learned that we had one chance to preserve this beautiful property and all of its agricultural, historic, cultural and natural resources,” said Rochester Board of Selectmen Chairperson Naida Parker. “And that one chance could only happen through a concerted effort and partnership between many groups: The Hiller Family, The Trustees of Reservations, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Rochester Land Trust, and the Towns of Rochester and Marion. Through persistence and hard work a plan came together that will ensure the permanent protection of over 780 acres of Eastover Farm.”

-6 pages to follow-

FY 04 Agricultural Preservation Restrictions

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs / Department of Agricultural Resources

Project Name	Town	Acres
Sheffield Land Trust / Macci-Preston	Sheffield	110.0
Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust / Hix Bridge Realty	Westport	150.0
Thomas	Sunderland	8.0
Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust / Schmid	Westport	136.0
Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust / Searle	Southampton	99.0
Franklin Land Trust / Thane-Stetson	Heath	123.0
Pascommuck Land Conservation Trust / Burt	Easthampton	29.0
Franklin Land Trust / Bostcom	Greenfield	22.0
Franklin Land Trust / Hager	Colrain	516.9
Babiak	Hadley	10.3
Massachusetts Land Conservation Trust / Thayer	Cummington	150.0
Franklin Land Trust / Scott	Hawley	15.3
Winding River Land Conservancy / Bailey	Westfield	93.3
Gaier / Reiber	Montague	10.0
Town of Amherst / Gray	Amherst	63.0
Izer	Hadley	5.3
Winding River Land Conservancy / Phelon	Westfield	78.9
Deerfield Land Trust / Williams	Deerfield	157.0
Reed / Chin-Yee	Sunderland	10.0
Graves	Greenfield	11.0

20 projects, 1,798 acres, \$5,600,000

FY 04 Self-Help Grant Awards

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs / Division of Conservation Services

Project Name	Town	Acres	Award	Description
Crowes Pasture / Coles Pond	Dennis	81.0	\$250,000	Priority habitat, protects both salt and fresh water resources.
Bosworth / Furman	Barnstable / Sandwich	18.6	\$100,000	550 feet of barrier beach frontage on Cape Cod Bay, part of large greenbelt
Springfield Tax Title IV	Springfield	6.7	\$62,230	Innovative acquisition; taking tax title land near existing conservation areas
Nashua Valley	Leominster	9.3	\$244,800	Protects city water supply, connects open space
Gardner	Quincy	3.1	\$92,500	Top acquisition priority in city Open Space Plan
Canoe River	Mansfield	49.0	\$150,900	Straddles the Canoe River; connects two conservation parcels
Hampshire Woods	Georgetown	44.6	\$165,300	Priority site for rare species habitat, connects two conservation parcels
Prouty Woods	Littleton	88.0	\$250,000	Northern shore of Long Lake, existing trails, excellent habitat
Hockanum Hill	Warwick	33.1	\$81,840	BioMap core habitat, links two sections of Warwick State Forest
Sparrow	Orleans	20.3	\$134,180	Connects existing conservation land

10 projects, 354 acres, \$1,531,750

FY 04 Urban Self-Help Grant Awards

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs / Division of Conservation Services

Project Name	Town	Acres	Award	FY05 Commitment	Description
Knights of Columbus / Coes Pond	Worcester	7.0	\$400,000	\$0	Provides public trail access along reservoir
Bass River Bathhouse	Yarmouth	0	\$70,000	\$0	Construction of bathhouse at Bass River Beach
Amesbury / Salisbury Mill Park	Amesbury	0	\$25,000	\$300,000	Creation of a new park linking the Carriage Museum to an existing pathway
Voke Park	Chelsea	0	\$31,250	\$274,650	Renovation of Voke Park
Trum Field III	Somerville	0	\$25,000	\$225,000	Design / reconstruction of field house and bleachers
Bartlett Mall Project Phase 3	Newburyport	0	\$15,625	\$229,375	Renovation of a city park that has been in existence since the 1600s
Ruth Elizabeth Park	Springfield	0	\$15,625	\$229,375	Design and renovation of Ruth Elizabeth Park
Urban Riverfront Park	Fitchburg	0	\$25,000	\$400,000	Design and renovation of historic steel truss bridge
Salisbury Greenway Extension	Brockton	0	\$31,250	\$306,750	Design and development of a new park
Pine Banks Park	Malden / Melrose	0	\$31,250	\$275,000	Improvements and renovations to park
Victory Park	Medford	0	\$0	\$250,000	Reconstruction of Victory park
Jefferson / McLaughlin Playgrounds	Boston	0	\$0	\$225,000	Renovation and reconstruction of Jefferson and McLaughlin playgrounds
North Central Pathway	Winchendon	0	\$0	\$135,000	Construction of one mile of the North Central rail trail along Whitney Pond, plus trailhead parking. 21E site re-use
Willetts Fields Renovation Project	Norwood	0	\$0	\$160,000	Reconstruction of athletic fields at the Willett School

Shaded projects represent design and development projects.

FY04: 10 projects, 7 acres, \$670,000

FY05 commitment: \$3,010,150

Previously Committed Urban Self-Help Grant Awards

Town of Norwood	\$15,200
Town of Easthampton	\$119,350
City of Chicopee	\$250,000
Town of Fairhaven	\$250,000
Town of Lenox	\$50,000
City of Springfield	\$250,000
City of Chelsea	\$240,715
City of Chelsea	\$127,580
City of Worcester	\$250,000
Town of Adams	\$200,000
Town of Framingham	\$250,000
City of Newburyport	\$123,500
City of Medford	\$250,000
City of Waltham	\$232,000
City of Fitchburg	\$250,000

15 projects, \$2,858,345

FY 04 Non-State Funded Self-Help and Urban Self-Help Projects
Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund
(Administered by EOEa)

Project Name	Town	Acres	LWCF Funding	Description
Hillcrest Country Club USH	Leicester	304	\$500,000	Town's top priority to protect water supply
Larkin Land USH	Hudson	1.1	\$70,000	Assabet River property next to town park
Hassanamesitt Woods SH	Grafton	200	\$400,000	Nationally significant Native American site.
Eastover Farm SH	Rochester	80	\$212,500	Active farm, rare cedar swamp, rare species, historic landscape
Muddy Pond SH	Westminster	125	\$85,000	Cold water stream, rare species habitat and Mid State Trail
Bush Hill SH	Ashburnham	458	\$450,000	Rare species habitat that is part of an inter-state conservation project

4 Self-Help projects, 2 Urban Self-Help Projects, 1,170 acres, \$1,717,500

FY 04 EOE A Priority Land Protection Projects

Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

Department of Conservation and Recreation / Department of Fish and Game

Project Type	Acres	Cost
Water Resources Protection (water supply, riverfront, estuaries, coastline)	1,303	\$3,845,000
Rare Species Habitat Protection	1,147	\$1,865,000
Urban Parks	39	\$745,000

41 projects, 2,489 acres, \$6,455,000

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